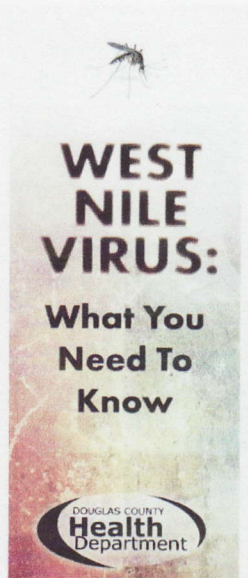


**West Nile Virus Educational Project
Douglas County Health Department
Omaha, NE**

www.douglascountyhealth.com



Educational Brochures

- For public Distribution explaining the WNV transmission and prevention

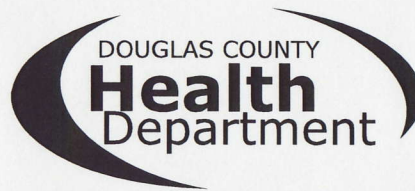
Tips to Reduce Exposure to Mosquitoes

- Eliminate any standing water on your property. Remove discarded tires from your property.
- Dispose of any water-holding containers and change bird bath water twice a week.
- Make sure that your doors and windows have tight fitting screens.
- Make sure roof gutters are not clogged and are draining properly.

Tips to Reduce Risk of Virus Infection

- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite, usually in the evening, at nighttime, or at dawn.
- If you are outdoors when mosquito activity is high, wear protective clothing such as long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and shoes and socks.
- Mosquito repellents can be used to avoid mosquito bites. Recent studies report that those repellents with DEET as an ingredient are effective. Precautions must be taken when using these products with children. Follow the manufacturer's directions.
- New products such as the AMosquito Magnet® have shown promise as an effective attractant and trapping device to reduce mosquito populations for homeowner or small commercial usages.

* Note: Vitamin B and ultrasonic devices have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

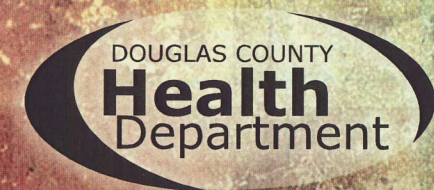


Contact the
Douglas County Health Department at
444-7489 or at
www.douglascountyhealth.com



WEST NILE VIRUS:

What You Need To Know



What Is West Nile Virus?

West Nile virus (WNV) is a potentially serious illness. Experts believe WNV is established as a seasonal epidemic in North America that flares up in the summer and continues into the fall. This fact sheet contains important information that can help you recognize and prevent West Nile virus.

What Are the Symptoms of WNV?

WNV affects the central nervous system. Symptoms vary.

- **No Symptoms in Most People.** Approximately 80 percent of people who are infected with WNV will not show any symptoms at all.
- **Mild Symptoms in Some People.** Up to 20 percent of the people who become infected will display mild symptoms, including fever, headache, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms typically last a few days.
- **Serious Symptoms in a Few People.** About one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. The severe symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent.

How Does It Spread?

- **Infected Mosquitoes.** Generally, WNV is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes are WNV carriers that become infected when they feed on infected birds. Infected mosquitoes can then spread WNV to humans and other animals when they bite.
- **Transfusions, Transplants, and Mother-to-Child.** In a very small number of cases, WNV also has spread through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breastfeeding and even during pregnancy from mother to baby.
- **Not through touching.** WNV is not spread through casual contact such as touching or kissing a person with the virus.

How Soon Do Infected People Get Sick?

People typically develop symptoms between 3 and 14 days after they are bitten by the infected mosquito.

How Is WNV Infection Treated?

There is no specific treatment for WNV infection. In cases with mild symptoms, people experience symptoms such as fever and aches that pass on their own. In more severe cases, people usually need to go to the hospital where they can receive supportive treatment including intravenous fluids, help with breathing and nursing care.

What Should I Do if I Think I Have WNV?

Mild WNV illness improves on its own, and people do not necessarily need to seek medical attention for this infection. If you develop symptoms of severe WNV illness, such as unusually severe headaches or confusion, seek medical attention immediately. Severe WNV illness usually requires hospitalization. Pregnant women and nursing mothers are encouraged to talk to their doctor if they develop symptoms that could be WNV.

What Is the Risk of Catching WNV?

- **For most, risk is low.** Less than 1 percent of people who are bitten by mosquitoes develop any symptoms of the disease and relatively few mosquitoes actually carry WNV.
- **Greater risk for those outdoors a lot.** People who spend a lot of time outdoors are more likely to be bitten by an infected mosquito. They should take special care to avoid mosquito bites.
- **People over 50 can get sicker.** People over the age of 50 are more likely to develop serious symptoms of WNV if they do get sick and should take special care to avoid mosquito bites.
- **Risk through medical procedures is low.** The risk of getting WNV through blood transfusions and organ transplants is very small, and should not prevent people who need surgery from having it. If you have concerns, talk to your doctor before surgery.
- **Pregnancy and nursing do not increase risk of becoming infected with WNV.**

Surveillance

The Douglas County Health Department conducts surveillance analysis and testing for West Nile Virus by 3 different methods: (1) Mosquito traps are set out every 2 weeks at 6 different locations to find whether mosquitoes in these areas are infected. (2) Larval surveillance at 14 locations around the county occurs weekly. Marshes and ponds are checked for mosquito larvae and larvicide is applied if larvae are present. (3) West Nile Virus is particularly lethal to birds in the Corvidae family (e.g., Crows and Bluejays) thus dead birds reported by the public are collected and tested for the presence of the virus